

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 24, 2005

The Honorable Kofi Annan
Secretary General
United Nations
799 United Nations Plaza
New York NY 10017

Dear Mr. Secretary General:

We are writing to express our grave concern about the situation of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the eleventh Panchen Lama of Tibet, who was abducted by the Chinese government 10 years ago.

On May 17, 1995, Chinese police abducted a six year old Tibetan boy named Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, and his family, from their village outside Lhasa. One week earlier, His Holiness the Dalai Lama had identified this boy as the 11th reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, traditionally one of the most important Tibetan religious figures and one who was often closely associated with the institution of the Dalai Lama. Incredibly, the atheist Communist Chinese authorities attacked the Dalai Lama for “interfering” in the selection process for the Panchen Lama when he recognized Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, and quickly moved to install another Tibetan boy, Gyalsten Norbu, as Panchen Lama,

Today, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family have been held *incommunicado* for 10 years. The Chinese authorities have criminalized possession of his photo and any attempt by Tibetan Buddhists to conduct normal religious practices venerating him as the Panchen Lama. At the same time, the Chinese have embarked on a relentless campaign to convince the Tibetan people and the world that their choice is the true Panchen Lama. This blatant interference in the selection of the Panchen Lama and other reincarnates is a “dress rehearsal” for China’s plans to control the selection of the next Dalai Lama, and a major part of the long-term strategy to control religious practice in Tibet.

Over the past decade, various UN mechanisms, including the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the High Commissioner on Human Rights, and various Special Rapporteurs, have sought information on and access to Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. The Chinese government consistently refuses to provide any concrete information about the status of the Panchen Lama to concerned governments or UN bodies, and has denied all requests that independent monitors be allowed to visit the boy.

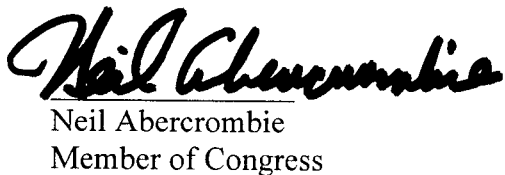
The Honorable Kofi Annan
May 24, 2005
Page 2

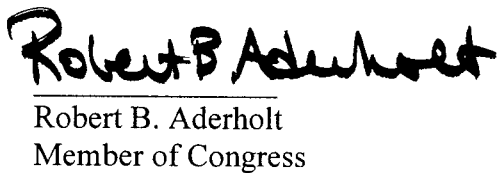
As Secretary General, you have worked to promote the advancement of human rights around the world and you have a great deal of stature as a world leader. We believe that as you serve your final year in this important post, you are uniquely positioned to make progress on this stalemated case. Therefore, we ask that you use your good offices – both directly and through the relevant mechanisms of the UN system – to demand that independent monitors be given immediate access to Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and that he be released from Chinese custody.

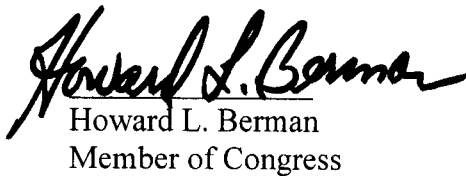
Thank you for your immediate attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to your response.

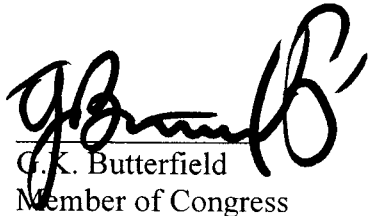
Sincerely,

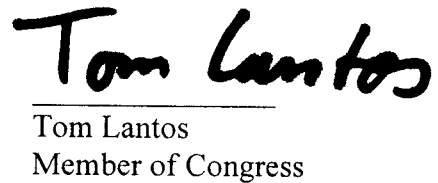

Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress


Neil Abercrombie
Member of Congress

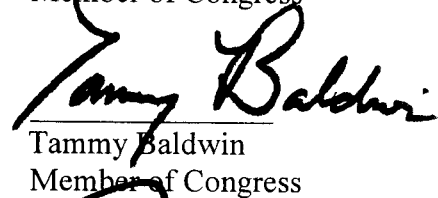

Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress

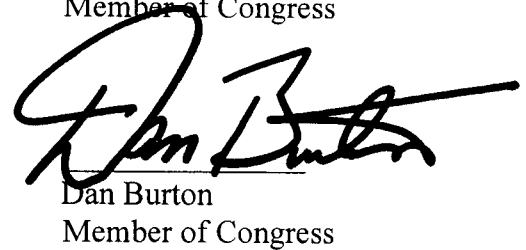

Howard L. Berman
Member of Congress

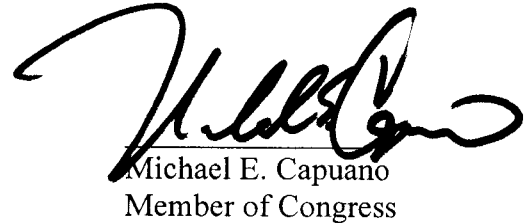

C.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress


Tom Lantos
Member of Congress


Gary L. Ackerman
Member of Congress


Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress


Dan Burton
Member of Congress

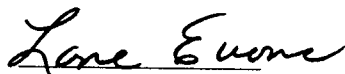

Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



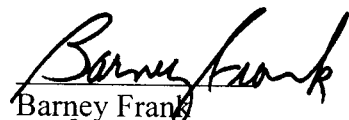
Christopher Cox
Member of Congress



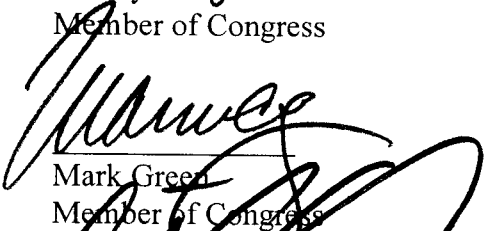
Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



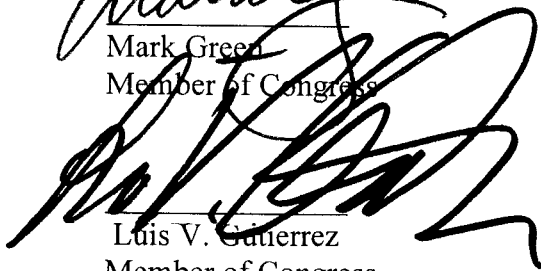
Lane Evans
Member of Congress



Barney Frank
Member of Congress



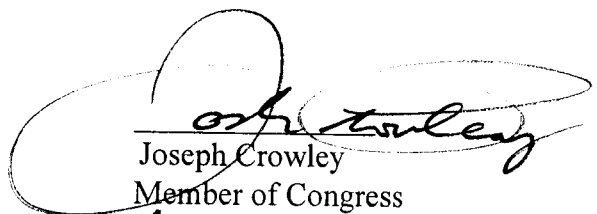
Mark Green
Member of Congress



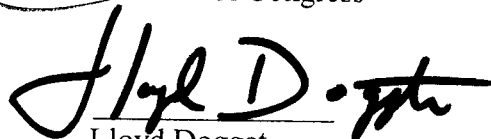
Luis V. Guterres
Member of Congress



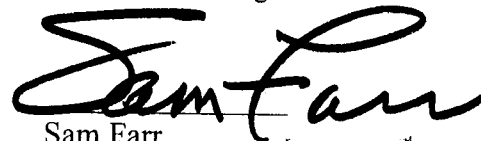
Jack Kingston
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



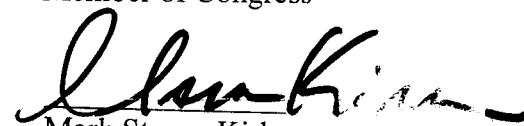
Sam Farr
Member of Congress



Virgil H. Goode
Member of Congress



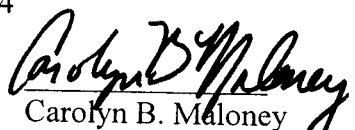
Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress




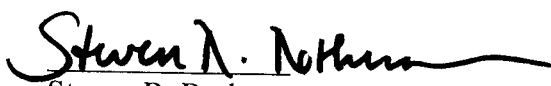
Mark Steven Kirk
Member of Congress

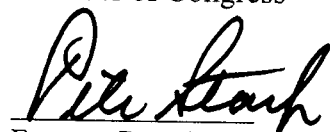


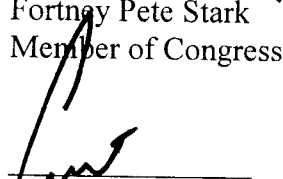
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

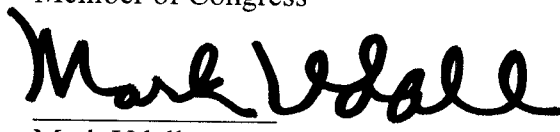

Michael R. McNulty
Member of Congress

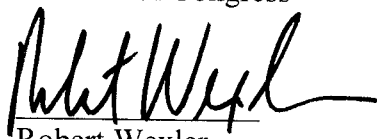

Steven R. Rothman
Member of Congress

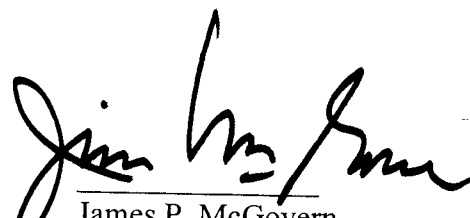

Fortney Pete Stark
Member of Congress

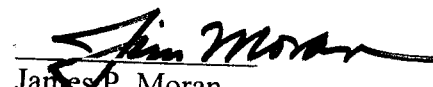

Curt Weldon
Member of Congress

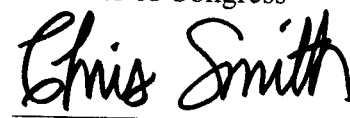

Nancy Pelosi
Member of Congress



Mark Udall
Member of Congress

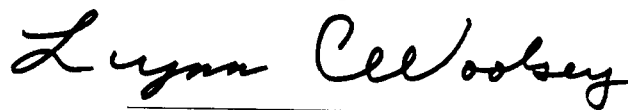

Robert Wexler
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

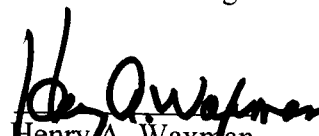

James P. Moran
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress


Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress


Lynn C. Woolsey
Member of Congress


Tom Udall
Member of Congress

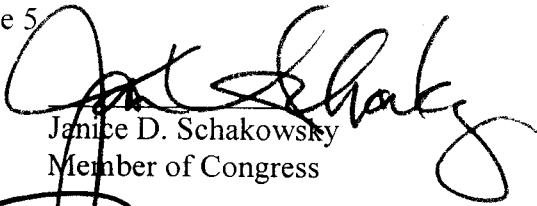

Henry A. Waxman
Member of Congress


Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

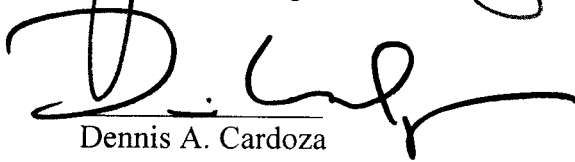
The Honorable Kofi Annan

May 24, 2005

Page 5

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janice D. Schakowsky".

Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis A. Cardoza".

Dennis A. Cardoza
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick J. Kennedy".

Patrick J. Kennedy
Member of Congress